United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

the UNESCO Courier

2008 – number 6 • ISSN 1993-8616

A PERMANENT CHALLENGE

Twenty-seven new sites have been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, in Quebec (Canada). While no changes were made to the List of Heritage in Danger, "reinforced monitoring" was requested for four sites: Bordeaux, (France),Timbuktu (Mali), Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru), Samarkand (Uzbekistan).

Under the new mechanism, first introduced in 2007, the Committee will be kept informed of developments affecting the preservation of these sites on a regular basis with a view to deciding on their future status on the World Heritage List.

© UNESCO /Véronique Dauge
Al-Hijr (Arabie Saoudite) est un des nouveaux sites inscrits du patrimoine mondial.

The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is perhaps the most widely recognized and effective conservation instrument in the world. One of its main purposes is to ensure "the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage". Inscription is thus not an end in itself but only the beginning.

The World Heritage Committee provides leadership in promoting systems to support the sustainability of heritage sites. There are processes to identify threats to World Heritage properties, including periodic reporting, reactive monitoring and, in cases of severe threat, In Danger listing.

Over the past biennium, the World Heritage Committee examined almost 300 State of Conservation reports, the highest number ever examined by the Committee. Nine properties were removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger, in recognition of the improvement in their state of conservation, while 5 additional sites were added. By flagging them on this special list, the Committee hopes to drawn particular attention to their plight.

Tip of the iceberg

But the In Danger List is only the tip of the iceberg. Most of the 878 World Heritage Sites face conservation

This document may be accessed online: www.unesco.org/courier

problems: construction of skyscrapers, bridges or oil pipelines, uncontrolled tourism, poaching, climate change.

© UNESCO/José Gabriel M. Ruíz Lembo
A new world heritage site: the town of San Miguel de Allende in Mexico.

The first major case discussed by the Committee was the proposed Mitte Wein project in the Historic Centre of Vienna, which in 2003 sparked an ongoing debate. The most recent example is the proposed Gazprom Tower development in St. Petersburg, by the major Russian natural gas company. During its meeting in Quebec, the Committee asked Russia to invite an expert mission from the World Heritage Centre and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) to evaluate the tower's impact, and to postpone action until results of the analysis are available.

Infrastructure projects like dams, canals, roads and bridges are often highlighted in the state of conservation reports on specific World Heritage Sites. In the case of the Group of Monuments at Hampi, India, a proposed bridge that threatened the site's values was re-routed away from the property, leading to the removal of the site from the In Danger List in 2006. Another situation yet to be resolved involves a proposed bridge at the Dresden Elbe Valley. In 2006, the Committee took the position that the bridge would "irreversibly damage the values and integrity of the property". This year, it regretted the construction of the bridge underway and urged

Contents

World Heritage: great escapes 1

Le Morne, spelled out 4

Legendary Camagüey 7

Three Armenian jewels in Iran 9

A world cradle of agriculture 13

Surtsey Island: a life-size laboratory 15

Tropical Canada! 18

Focus: The people who made history dance 20

Landmarks: His name is Saroyan 22

Next month: Africa in the Spotlight 23

Partners 23

Travel in pictures 24

© UNESCO/N.Burke
Hampi (India). General view.

the authorities to opt for a tunnel. If the bridge construction is not stopped and damage reversed, the Committee decided, the property will be deleted from the World Heritage List in 2009.

The threat of uncontrolled tourism is one that occurs frequently at World Heritage Sites. There are travel companies that create tour packages around UNESCO sites, using the label 'UNESCO World Heritage Site' as a tourism marketing brand. At Angkor in Cambodia, there are reportedly 5000 visitors a day. In the Galapagos Islands, tourism has increased from 40,000 visitors in 1991 to 120,000 in 2006. The problems related to tourism include threats to public security and the heritage resources as well as to the quality of the visitor experience. The World Heritage Committee works on developing principles for responsible tourism that apply to the stewards and custodians, to tour companies, to the people who write guidebooks as well as to tourists.

Over time, the Committee has dealt with cases of mining, logging, gas and oil extraction as well as the poaching of animals for commercial purposes. And the Committee can claim some spectacular successes, such as the re-routing of the mining road around Huascaran National Park (Peru) and the re-alignment of a proposed oil pipeline outside the watershed of Lake Baikal (Russia). A singular achievement for UNESCO is the 2003 undertaking by the International Council on Mining and Metals not to explore or mine in World Heritage Sites, recognizing them as "no-go" areas.

An important advance: reinforced monitoring mechanism

Among the less manageable threats are natural disasters, including extreme weather events, fires and floods often related to the broader issue of climate change. In collaboration with international institutions and committees, the World Heritage Committee has developed its own policy framework and operational plan for monitoring and addressing the impacts of climate change on World Heritage properties. (See "Case Studies on Climate Change and World Heritage", a 2007 UNESCO report)

Another issue that is beyond the control of the Committee is the threat to sites from civil unrest and armed conflict. As an example, particular concern for the deteriorating condition of the properties in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) led the Committee last year to decide on a comprehensive approach for all five In Danger sites.

© NESCO/I. Redmond
Skulls of plain gorillas, victims of war and the bush meat trade (DRC).

The Committee has also recently adopted a "reinforced monitoring mechanism" for properties inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger, applying it to the five sites in DRC, as well as Dresden and Jerusalem. This mechanism can be activated either by the World Heritage Committee or by the Director-General of UNESCO in specific and exceptional cases. At its 32nd session in Quebec, decisions were taken to apply it to Timbuktu (Mali), Machu Picchu (Peru), Samarkand (Uzbekistan) and Bordeaux (France),

which are not on the In Danger list. The case of the five DRC sites was again closely examined.

For the first time in the history of the Convention, the World Heritage Committee in 2007 decided, with deep regret, to remove a property, the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary in Oman, from the World Heritage List. The Committee judged that the property had deteriorated to the extent that it had lost its Outstanding Universal Value. This dramatic moment of the Convention reminds us all that protection of World Heritage is a shared responsibility. It is the obligation of States Parties to protect the World cultural and natural heritage situated on their territory; it is the duty of the international community as a whole to assist and to cooperate with States Parties in this endeavour.

At the 32nd session in Quebec, Canada made a special effort to engage young people in the work of the World Heritage Committee. The long-term conservation of our World Heritage Sites depends on the will of future generations to take over stewardship responsibilities. Engaging today's youth will shape the decision-makers of tomorrow.

Christina Cameron, University of Montreal
Chairperson of the 32nd World Heritage Committee

Le Morne, spelled out

Morning, Oppression, Reverie... with these words Mauritian poet Édouard J. Maunick begins to write "Le Morne", a name charged with emotion, a mountain laden with memory, a sacred place in the history of the maroon - runaway slaves - of Mauritius, and now a World Heritage site.

Morning – if there is a morning – of deceptive light because morning is forbidden to those most dislocated beings: promised to a cruel fate according to the holy will of the privileged...

Oppression, permanent through definite absence of good and wellbeing for those women and men struck by who knows what unexplained and equally inexplicable curse...

Reverie, never dreamed, of freedom to say simple words like I am like you, with you, I am you and to make gestures not always the gestures of genuflection and prostration...

Never cry with joy, never! But burn ceaselessly burn with the fire of bitter tears because nothing – day or night – sings or enchants...

End by giving up on life rather than enduring: that is what the word Morne can inspire in the horrible vocabulary of forbidden places and doomed desires...

Moreover!

© UNESCO/Anwar Janooi
Le Morne was a place of refuge for runaway slaves.

Only light can vanquish all the night of the fate imposed on the disinherited. Thus Le Morne instead of source of solitude forms an island extension, a front garden instead of a place of torture from which the victim, drunk with despair, leaps into the void to die somewhere on the murderous slope. From which

too the fake dive into the ocean (a fable), an impossible take-off for the most able of athletes and even less proper to those half-dead three-quarters exhausted by hunger, thirst and pain... From which in particular the light, now returned into time, incarnated in the house of the Morne.

Order and counter order of time's tragic isolation, clarity taking the guise of the commonplace, the plateau of the Morne assuming the value of heritage. History gets involved, all the better: no longer is it a question of a geographic hill but a place telling its truth, albeit so tragic. The narrative is worth a stop. Le Morne is no longer solitude but symbol of liberation.

© UNESCO/François Odendaal
To reach the summit of Le Morne, a crevasse hundreds of metres deep must be crossed.

© UNESCO/François Odendaal
An idyllic spot with a troubled past.

Reverie finally touching reality, the Morne Brabant like the doleful on other islands rejoins the world in its integrity. No longer a corner of an island however picturesque, but part of humanity that not naming would be a fault if not a sin.

None can contradict the whole world. Obliterating Le Morne Brabant of Mauritius is like forgetting the work of Mahatma Gandhi, the struggle of Martin Luther King Jr., the epic of Nelson Mandela, to cite only these few examples. The misadventure lived by Le Morne's two thousand slaves is as present in memory as any other closer to us.

Ending, the inclusion of the Morne Brabant on the World Heritage List is like the image of the trochetia, the native flower of Mauritius, ennobling the whole island.

Édouard J. Maunick, Mauritian poet.

Le Morne, in other words

The mountain

The Morne Brabant is situated in the south-west of Mauritius on an isthmus that juts out into the Indian Ocean. The mountain is covered in high brush and forests sheltering a volcano with a summit at 556 m, surrounded with hills and lagoons. The summit of the Morne is a small plateau watered by a permanent source.

The symbol

In the time of slavery, Le Morne was a place of refuge for fugitive slaves known as "maroons". Today it has become a symbol of resistance to oppression and the struggle for liberty.

Slavery

In the 17th century and until abolition in 1835, the island of Mauritius was a hub of the slave trade, at the crossroads of Africa, the Indies and the Americas.

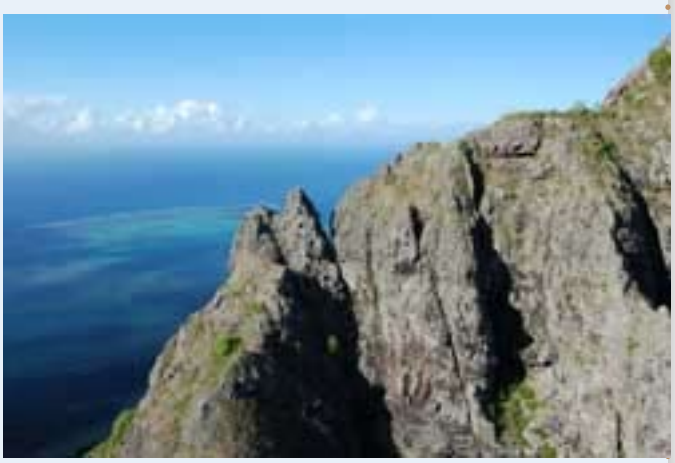
The slaves came from Madagascar, Mozambique, Guinea, West Africa, the Canary Islands, as well as Bengal, Malabar and Timor.

Between 1767 and 1797, the number of slaves tripled, reaching 49,000. Slaves made up about 80% of the population of Mauritius.

Maroons

Maroons were slaves who ran away from their owners and lived in hiding in the mountain and its surroundings. Numerous maroons found refuge in the Morne's dense forests, isolated and inaccessible. Some only survived in freedom for a few weeks. Others succeeded in founding small communities on the mountain and in its hidden caves.

Around 1770, nearly 5% of the slave population was maroon. The number had risen to 13% by 1820.



© UNESCO/François Odendaal

Faced with recapture, maroons chose to leap into the void.

It is said...

To reach the Morne's summit, you have to get across a crevasse several hundred meters deep. It is said slaves crossed over at its narrowest point, 1.60 m wide, on a wooden plank.

It is also said that rather than be recaptured by their owners, maroons chose suicide by leaping into the void.

Historical markers

Mauritius is situated 800 km east of Madagascar and 220 km east of Reunion Island. It was a Dutch colony first (1598- 1710), then French (1715-1810) and finally British (1810-1968). Mauritius became an independent state in 1968.

L.M.

Legendary Camagüey

The birthplace of Cuba's national poet, Nicolás Guillén, has just been inscribed on the World Heritage List. With its red tiles, neoclassical façades with their louver-boards and pilasters, windows and carved screens, the city of Camagüey offers its visitors a haughty and legendary beauty

As my friend the Cuban poet Roberto Méndez, a native of Camagüey, tells it, the indigenous chief Camagüebax welcomed the Spaniards with open arms when they arrived in 1514 in what they would call Villa Santa María del Puerto Príncipe. The chief gave them a ribbon of land stretched between the Tinima and Hatibonico rivers so they could settle. They, in exchange, murdered him and threw him off a mountaintop. Legend has it the land all around immediately turned red.

That said, the capital of Cuba's most extensive province, also called Camagüey, had to be re-founded several times in diverse circumstances down through history. First the indigenous people rose up against the conquistadores, then pirates attacked and finally in 1616 a dreadful fire reduced all the ecclesiastical archives to ashes. Difficult, then, to piece together the history of the city, which in the past was characterized by narrow and sinuous street like a medieval town, in flagrant contrast to the rectangular shape of its main square today.

© Ele Willoughby
The old houses still bear the names of their owners in colonial times.

© UNESCO/Prensa latina
Pilasters and wrought-iron balustrades are part of Camagüey's charm.

Following the 1616 fire, the city's first parish church, La Parroquial, was rebuilt. It was moved from its original site facing the city council to a side of Arms Square. From then on, urban geography adopted the church as its core and the square as its centre. It was around the latter, renamed Agramante Park, that the most important government buildings were erected.

The city with the earthenware jars

Residential buildings definitely take up the most space within the central historical heritage, which is for sure the largest in Cuba. We must remember that in 1800, at the start of the 19th century, the Royal Justice Palace of Santo Domingo Island was transferred to Camagüey, when the former Spanish colony became French under the Treaty of Basel. As a result prominent families came to live in the city, giving impetus to majestic architecture with its own particularities, consisting mainly of what we call today

neoclassical houses, which still bear the names of their owners in olden times.

These large palaces, built in the second half of the 19th century, conform to the fashion of the era that favoured neoclassical style and had as antecedents the vast two-storey houses of the previous century. We can therefore affirm that starting in 1850 architecture took on a new esthetic. The most eloquent example is the Socarrás building, designed in 1862 by the Spanish architect Dionisio de la Iglesia, whose influence is evident on all subsequent buildings. Everywhere we find the rhetorical alternation of pilasters and bay windows as well as balconies defined by wrought-iron balustrades.

© Ahron de Leeuw
Daily life in Camagüey.

In 1841, Camagüey comprised 125 streets composed of 1033 blocks of houses, and already standing since the 18th century were buildings like the convent and hospital of San Juan de Dios, the churches of La Merced and La Soledad, the Jesuit college and the women's hospital, all imposing constructions typical of the century's architecture.

But if there is one thing that gives personality to this city the Cubans call "Legendary", it is the enormous earthenware jars, like those in Andalusia, placed on the patios of houses and in gardens and parks which fill with rainwater and are intended to keep epidemics from spreading. They started making them in 1620, at the same time as the bricks and tiles used in the construction of all the city's buildings.

Camagüey is also scattered with an impressive number of churches, which earned it the nickname "city of temples". All of them share the same feature, a single tower. The architectonic complex that includes the Iglesia de Nuestra Señora del Carmen, the Ursuline convent and the women's hospital is the most typical example.

If the cart had not got stuck in the mud...

But the church that goes farthest back in time is the old Ermita de Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, haunted by a legend. The story goes that at the beginning of the 17th century, a cart drawn by oxen came to a halt at the future site of the church, stuck in the mud. The load was removed to lighten the cart and a mysterious bundle fell to the ground, containing the image of Our Lady of La Soledad. Brother José de la Cruz Espí, known as Father Valencia, recognized this as a sign and had the church built, along with a number of other Christian houses of worship.

It was in Camagüey, furthermore, that what is considered Cuba's first literary work, El Espejo de Paciencia, the Mirror of Patience, materialized, written by the public writer from the Canary Islands Nicolás Guillén, the island's national poet.

In the general cemetery is preserved the epitaph that poet and barber Agustín de Moya is believed to have written in memory of his beloved and inaccessible Dolores Rondón. According to Méndez, Dolores, the illegitimate daughter of a Catalan merchant, chose out of self-interest to accept the advances of a Spanish officer instead of the love-struck Moya's. In 1863, the barber found her in the women's hospital, disfigured and dying of the pox. Above the common grave where she was buried, an epitaph appeared on a piece of wood. Anonymous hands renewed the inscription as the years passed, until finally in the 19th century the mayor, Pedro García Argenot, decided to build a tomb in the central part of the cemetery.

The epitaph on it reads:

Here Dolores Rondón came to the end of her path.
Come, mortal, and consider,
How great are pride and self-importance
Opulence and power
Everything withers in the end
Because nothing is immortal
Except the harm we keep ourselves from doing
And the good we are able to do.

Marilyn Bobes, Cuban poet.

Three Armenian jewels in Iran

The northwest provinces in Iran have sheltered a number of Armenian churches for several centuries. As time went by, cultural interpenetration left there an astonishing mixture of symbols within the typically Armenian architecture. Three monastic ensembles in this region were inscribed this year on the World Heritage List.

The place, according to legend, of the apostle Thaddeus's martyrdom in the first century A.D., the monastery of Saint Thaddeus of Artaz (Artazi Sourb T'adei vank') every summer brings together thousands of pilgrims. It is enthroned, majestic and solitary, in the lunar landscape of the Maku valley, on a promontory at an altitude of 2,200 metres, where Saint Gregory, father of the Armenian church, founded a place of worship in the 4th century. So much for legend.

© Arthur Guevorkian
The two churches of Saint Thaddeus monastery.

Saint Thaddeus of Artaz

First mentioned in records in the 12th century, the Saint Thaddeus monastery was destroyed in 1319 by an earthquake. The present condition of the monuments is the result of two restoration and construction campaigns in the 17th and 19th centuries. The monastery is composed of two adjoining churches, a porch and monastic buildings aligned along the vast quadrilateral inner courtyard with towers. The enclosure is prolonged to the west by a large courtyard for the use of pilgrims and visitors, while several chapels are set on surrounding hills.

Undated, but typical of the Armenian Middle Ages, the western church, referred to as "Black", was probably built in 1329. It has lost its western arm, destroyed when the main church was built. A large prominent cross within the dome and a cross vault in the apse essentially make up its interior decoration, the sobriety of which stands out against the opulence of its exterior ornaments. Creating a lively contrast with the dark grey basalt covering the facades, blocks of pale beige limestone cover the cupola and the roof. They are also arranged in horizontal strips on the drum (cylinder on which the cupola rests) and form large ornamental

compositions on the facades. Typical of the 17th century, the decoration is probably the result of reconstruction carried out between 1680 and 1685.

Distinctly larger, the main "white" church was built between 1810 and 1830 in pale beige limestone. It is bathed in light, thanks to the 12 windows cut into the drum of its dome. Its distinctive characteristics are its floor plan inspired by Echmiatsin (near Yerevan, Armenian capital) and its elaborate decoratively sculpted exterior, the prototype of which is Aghtamar's Holy Cross church on Lake Van in Turkey. The iconography of its relief sculptures testifies to an astonishing diversity of cultural influences. The first register, comprised of flat niches, harbours saintly knights, crosses, stylized cypresses in the Turkish and Iranian style, but also the Iranian emblem of a rising sun and a lion. Above the niches runs a double frieze of foliated scrolls emerging from vases, a motif of Western origin found frequently not only in Armenia but also Turkey and Iran in the late Middle Ages. The foliage in the upper row surrounds a multitude of scenes of hunting and rural life, battles, images of real and imaginary animals, as well as scenes from Iranian poetry and mythology. In the upper register can be identified portraits, based for the most part on Western models, of Moses, King David, the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Saint Gregory the Enlightener and the archbishop Simeon carrying the model of the church.

© UNESCO/Armenia A. Prepis

Detail from the western facade of the church, Saint Stepanos monastery.

Restoration work was undertaken with UNESCO's support in 1972 and 1973, following an earthquake in 1940 that seriously damaged the buildings. The work continued regularly until 2001, when an overall conservation programme was established.

As for history, it tells us that Saint Thaddeus was the seat of the Armenian diocese in the 10th century; it endured the Mongol invasions in the 13th century; in the following century, it was held by the Unitors, who wanted to unite the Armenian and Roman churches; it was pillaged by the Persian Qadjar dynasty at the end of the 1700s and became a centre of resistance against the Ottomans at the dawn of the 20th century.

This major site of the Armenian church has just been inscribed, along with Saint Stepanos and Dzordzor, on the World Heritage List. It constitutes a remarkable artefact of Armenian culture in the region, which was one of the most prosperous and coveted in this part of the world, as well as one of the most fertile in cultural exchange.

That explains the astonishing mixture of styles in the two churches of Saint Thaddeus monastery: the medieval "Black Church", from which the little neighbouring village got its name, Quara-Kelisa ("black church" in Turkish), and the "White Church", built in the 19th century on the model of Echmiatsin (a World Heritage site since 2000), close to Armenia's capital Yerevan.

With their pyramidal domes on polygonal drums, arches, niches and sculpted decorations in horizontal bands, these two central-domed cross-hall churches are emblematic of Armenian architecture, of which St Stepanos of Darresham (Dara chambi Sourb Stepannos Nakhavka), main church of the second monastic ensemble to be inscribed as world heritage, provides another eloquent illustration.

An impressive building in a spectacular landscape – the description briefly sums up this site, located east of Saint Thaddeus, in the gorges of the river Araxe. Reaching its apogee in the 14th century, the monastery today shares the vestiges of its former glory with Yerevan and Venice, where a portion of

the iconography and literature produced behind its walls is now housed.

Its hardest times came in the 11th and 12th centuries, during the wars between Byzantium and the Seldjukids, and in the 13th and 14th centuries under Mongol domination, and 300 years later, when Shah Abbas decided to "clear" the border area, causing the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Armenians towards central Iran.

The monastery suffered by human hand but also because of nature. It had to be rebuilt several times. It was destroyed, as was Saint Thaddeus, by the 1319 earthquake, and, along with all buildings from

© Arthur Guevorkian
Cupola typical of Armenian architecture.

St Stepanos of Darresham

The Monastery of St Stepanos (Stephen) exists in 10th century records, but the present constructions date from the 17th and 19th centuries. The main church was built between 1643 and 1655, commissioned by the bishop Hakob of Djulfa, future Patriarch. It is one of the most eloquent illustrations of the 17th century Armenian architectural renaissance, period in which it was rebuilt.

© UNESCO/Armenia/A. Prepis
In the gorges of the Araks River, St Stepanos monastery has resisted history's vicissitudes for centuries.

Its boundaries marked by a quadrilateral enclosure with round towers, the complex comprises two courtyards. The raised southern courtyard is surrounded by monastic buildings, while the northern courtyard encloses the main church, flanked with a chapel-arcade and a bell tower. The buildings are covered in slabs of ochre and brown limestone in checkerboard pattern.

Twenty-five metres high, the church conforms to a design that is old-fashioned for its time: a tetraconch or triple apse in the form of a clover within a rectangle. The apse is flanked by two large two-story chapels. The western side contains a tribune, a structure rarely found in Armenian architecture. The slightly curved form of the arches, the alveoles in the vaults of niches and the plant motifs that appear around cherubs on the frescoes painted in 1826 are the fruit of Iranian influence.

Outside, the facades carry sculpted representations of the Virgin and Child, the Crucifixion, the Annunciation, the Resurrection and the stoning of St Stephen. But they are also interspersed with a Seljukid chain pattern, as frequent in medieval Armenian art as it is typical of Muslim ornamentation.

Crowned with an umbrella-shaped dome, its drum has 16 facets, one for each apostle in addition to God, the Virgin, St John the Baptist and St Gregory the Enlightener. Each fold of the umbrella is topped by a stone cross and at its narrow tip ends in the head of a man or an animal.

ancient Armenia with its extremely harsh weather, it is very vulnerable to climate variations. The alluvial ground represents another constant threat to the St Stepanos (Stephen) Monastery. But constant conservation work prolongs its existence.

A management plan for the three monastic ensembles was established in 2001, following up the conservation that began in the 1970s.

Twenty years ago, the little Holy-Mother-of-God chapel (Sourb Astvatzatzin), the only remnant of the famous Dzordzor monastery, demolished at the time of Shah Abbas in the early 17th century, was saved from certain death. Left alone for 300 years in the valley of the Makuchay river, it was fated to disappear too when the Iranian government decided to build a dam. But it was dismantled and rebuilt 600 metres away, with the support of the Armenian church. All the chapel's stones were numbered and those scattered on the ground reassembled, so that out of the 1548 stones, only 250 (lighter in colour) do not come from the original construction.

© UNESCO/Armenia/A. Prepis
The chapel of Dzordzor has a strikingly vivid outline.

Holy-Mother-of-God of Dzordzor

Built out of carefully carved limestone blocks, with a dome above a cross that is slightly elongated from west to east, typical of Armenian architecture, the Dzordzor chapel's lively silhouette is striking. Topped by a cupola resting on a 16-sided drum, it features a series of layers of stones that are lower and darker than the others, giving its facades an unusual rhythm. On the whole, however, its exterior decoration is quite austere. On its western façade it is limited to a strip of moulding that surrounds the door and forms a broken arch above the tympanum.

© Arthur Guevorkian
Work on Dzordzor chapel.

In danger of vanishing underwater due to the construction of a dam, the chapel was moved a distance of 600 metres upstream in 1987-1988. A restoration, notably of the umbrella dome, was undertaken at the same time.

Undated, the Dzordzor chapel has been attributed by some specialists to the 9th or 10th century, and by others to the 14th century, high point in the history of the monastery of which it is the only vestige.

With its umbrella-shaped dome, it stands like an elegant and solitary princess in the semi-desert landscape. This picturesque cupola remains a key element of Armenian architecture from the 10th century until now. Set on a drum, which allows the inside of the church to be lit almost entirely from above, it surmounts the vaulted ceiling, symbol of the heavens and the aspiration for salvation. Placed in the centre of the church, the cupola crowns the juncture of the four arms of the cross, representing the assembly of believers, the church of humanity on earth.

Patrick Donabedian, researcher at the Laboratoire d'archéologie médiévale méditerranéenne (CNRS, France) et Jasmina Šopova, UNESCO Courier.

A world cradle of agriculture

Against all odds, Kuk Swamp proves that agriculture started in Papua New Guinea 10,000 years ago. Kuk Swamp, a new World Heritage site, holds treasured remains of early agriculture and drainage. By cultivating the land, the Kawelka people preserve their heritage.

© Eric Lafforgue

In Papua New Guinea, humans began mastering agriculture 10,000 years ago.

In Papua New Guinea, the Kuk Swamp agricultural community is well-organized, and despite what people think, that's not new! The traditional landowners of the area, the Kawelka, have been cultivating sweet potatoes, bananas and coffee across the area most recently since the 1990s, but they inhabited the area during various periods of the twentieth century and before.

The Kawelka say they told stories to anthropologists who took them away, whereas archaeologists told them stories that they didn't know. Among these stories is the fact that 7,000 to 10,000 years ago, Kuk was a centre of early independent agricultural development. It was a place where people undertook a transition from pre-existing foraging practices to agriculture.

The taming of the banana

For many people including archaeologists, the mountains of Papua New Guinea seem an unlikely place to find evidence of early independent agricultural development. But archaeological excavations in the 1960s and investigations carried out by Jack Golson [a now retired Australian archaeologist who passed on the torch to Tim Denham,] have proven otherwise.

Archaeological remains such as cultivated surfaces, raised beds and ditches of ancient cultivation have been found buried in Kuk Swamp, located 1,550 metres above sea level in the Upper Wahgi Valley, which is one of the largest valleys in the mountainous spine that runs east-west across the centre of the island of New Guinea. Such archaeological

© Taro Taylor
Fruit and nut trees were among the first to be cultivated in New Guinea.

findings are exceptional because the transition from foraging practices to early independent agriculture occurred in very few places in the world. Thus, each of them including Kuk is of global significance for understanding one of the greatest technological developments of modern humans.

Different types of agriculture based on certain crops and cultivation methods emerged independently in Southwest Asia, Southeast China, the Americas, potentially Africa, and New Guinea. In Southwest Asia and Southeast China, early agriculture was seed-based on cereals, legumes and other plants.

By contrast, early New Guinean agriculture, as it is still practiced on the island today, was based exclusively on the propagation of a range of food and economic plants including fruit and nut-bearing trees, root crops like yams and taro, sugarcane, herbs, leafy vegetables and bananas. Recent studies suggest most of these plants, especially the banana, were first domesticated in the New Guinea region. Some seed-based planting also occurred, but cultivation consisted mainly of vegetative reproduction utilizing tubers, corms, suckers, stems and cuttings.

Cultivating the soil to protect the site

Ten thousand years ago, people were clearing patches within the rainforest and modifying the wetland environment at Kuk, whose landscape probably looked like a mosaic of forest, grassland patches and habitats disturbed by human activities. A few pits dug into the wetland edge and stone tools embedded with microscopic residues of tubers of taro and yam suggest the population had already started to focus on starch-rich plants.

Three thousand years later, the inhabitants really started developing the area. They grew plants on mounds, a type of raised bed, along the wetland margin: the underground bases of these preserved beds are still discernible in the mud. They cultivated water-tolerant plants like taro at the base of the mounds, and water-intolerant plants such as bananas and yams on the top. It also seems that these starch-rich staples were inter-cropped with leafy vegetables.

Similar forms of multi-cropped cultivation have occurred on adjacent slopes of the Kuk Swamp area. The rainforest of the Upper Wahgi valley was completely cleared because of horticulture activities and burning. Most of the valley has remained a grassland since then.

© Eric Lafforgue
Hand of a « mud man » (Papua New Guinea) with sharpened bamboo.

A drainage system of articulated ditch networks was implemented 4,000 years ago to enable cultivation. The Swamp contains the oldest, best-preserved and most extensive cultivation remains in New Guinea, which consist of traces in different types of mud made of old soils and former drainage feature fillings. The extent and patterns of ditch networks have varied through time. Although the reasons for

periodic drainage and abandonment of the wetland are unknown, it could be related to climatic, hydrological or social factors.

Today, several hundred Kawelka live on and cultivate Kuk Swamp and its surroundings. Despite oral traditions that intimately relate the community to the land, the Kawelka are not sure whether their connection to Kuk extends back over millennia. But it doesn't matter.

They have voluntarily committed themselves to protect the buried archaeological remains, which includes leaving certain areas free of cultivation and regulating development in other areas. To the Kawelka, heritage is something they are directly connected to through their land and history. Thus, the protection of Kuk is achieved by allowing the Kawelka to continue to occupy and cultivate the site.

Tim Denham, Monash University, Australia.

Surtsey Island: a life-size laboratory

The island of Surtsey (Iceland), recently added to the World Heritage List, has been a unique opportunity for scientists to monitor evolution since the day it emerged from the sea in 1963. The once barren volcanic island preserved from human interference is now crowding with plants, insects and birds.

© UNESCO/Torgny Nordin
This little patch of land emerged from the ocean in 1963.

The first time Sveinn Jakobsson set foot on Surtsey island, the western crater Surtungur was spitting lava into a big glowing red lake flowing to the sea. It was June 1964. The newborn island had been spewing volcanic ashes, smoke and steam at the sky for the past seven months. The eastern crater Surtur had just fallen asleep when its twin Surtungur started erupting. "It was fantastic," said Jakobsson, an Icelandic geologist who has been monitoring Surtsey for 40 years. "I was only a student. It was my first eruption... It was breathtaking."

Surtsey emerged from the ocean floor in November 1963. Within four years, the little drop of smoky land located 32 km south of Iceland reached the size of 2.65 km^2, its peak culminating 175m above sea level.

Surtsey is one of 18 islands and skerries of the Icelandic Vestmannaeyjar archipelago (the Westman islands), a young volcanic system whose activity started about 100,000 years ago. It is the youngest and second largest island after Heimaey (13.6km^2), the only one of the archipelago to be inhabited.

Marine erosion has made Surtsey shrink to half its original size. But, contrary to its two tiny neighbours Syrtlingur and Jolnir that survived only six months, the 45-year-old island won't be washed away before long.

The key to Surtsey's longer life expectancy is its hydrothermal anomaly: when the ocean, heated up by lava extrusions, penetrates the porous tephra made of volcanic ashes and rock fragments, the steam makes the loose tephra consolidate into palagonite tuff. Palagonite tuff, which consists mainly of basaltic glass, is much more solid than tephra and does not erode easily, Jakobsson said. That's why the

palagonite tuff core of Surtsey of approximately 400 m^2, about the size of a basketball court, will probably remain intact for a few thousand years.

A paradise for scientists

A Nature Reserve since 1965, Surtsey is well preserved because human presence and activities have been minimal. Nobody is allowed to set foot on Surtsey except six to ten scientists who monitor the island for one or two weeks every year. Human facilities are limited to a field hut, a helicopter pad and a lighthouse. The scientists must be careful not to bring soil, organisms and pollutants to the island or leave any waste. Besides, there is no heavy industry or environmentally hazardous activity within a 50-km radius of the island.

Surtsey is the only volcanic island in the world that has been so carefully studied since the first day of its emergence. "It is still the best described eruption of this kind," Jakobsson said. The fast colonization of species, which has been carefully monitored, shows the island is becoming similar to the rest of the Vestmannaeyjar archipelago. "In the old days there was a handful of species, we could mark them and see how the seeds would spread," said the Icelandic plant ecologist Borgthór Magnússon. But they have spread so fast that Magnússon now keeps track of them on permanent study plots on the island.

Shortly after Surtsey emerged from the sea, algae and organic material drifted ashore feeding microorganisms like bacteria and fungi. Meanwhile, the wind and the ocean carried the first seeds onto the shore. Shore plants like sea sandwort, lyme grass and oyster plants progressively spread on the sand and tephra substrate. In 1970 the first sea birds, the Northern fulmar and black guillemot, started breeding on the cliffs of Surtsey.

Four years later, the first sea gulls nested on the island. "The gulls had a very strong effect on the development of the island," Magnússon said. They started pulling out native plants to build their nests in the developing dunes, which enhanced plant development. Then, they were the first birds to breed upon the sands and ashes of Surtsey. They also carried seeds of new plant species to the island and fertilized

© UNESCO/Sigurður H. Magnússon
Barren in 1963, the island is now rich in plants.

the soil with their excrements. The first land bird, a snow bunting that feeds on insects, was seen in 1996. "We are always excited to see if we have a new species. It's like we've found a treasure," Magnússon said.

Surtsey is a migrating crossroads between Europe, Iceland, and the Canadian Arctic. That's why two migratory bird species, the meadow pipit and white wagtail, often stop by, while two rare species, the European Squacco heron and the North American northern oriole, have been sighted a few times. On the whole, 12 species and more than 1,200 birds breed on Surtsey.

A puffin island

Besides its vibrant bird life, 335 invertebrate species including flies, butterflies, spiders and molluscs have been found on Surtsey. Seals come breed and pup on the shore, while Minke whales, killer whales, harbour porpoise and dolphins have been seen along the coast. On the other hand, four plant species out of 69 haven't survived.

A new, white mineral found in 1991 may be named "Surtseyite," Jakobsson said. In the craters scattered by colourful encrustations, and the lava caves that show impressive stalactites, 18 mineral species have been identified.

Despite the proliferation of species in just half a century, Magnússon predicts Surtsey will be a puffin

© Ómar Runólfsson
In 200 years, Surtsey will be inhabited by sea parrots, like this handsome specimen.

island 200 years from now. The grassland is becoming similar to what is found on the other Westman islands where the puffin, a white and black-headed bird with a bright orange beak and a black frock coat, likes to breed and nest. "It is likely to become the biggest bird population of Surtsey and breed there in far greater numbers as time passes," Magnússon said.

Now Surtsey is a World Heritage site, the Surtsey Research Society hopes to "create interest in protecting Surtsey and do more research," said its chairman Steingrímur Hermannsson. The gatekeeper of the island may also hope to bring back the international scientists and funds that were involved in the early days of Surtsey.

Surtsey, whose name come from Surtur, the god of fire in the Icelandic mythology, has just started to fire our interest.

Laurène Mainguy, intern at the UNESCO Courrier.

The *UNESCO Courier* published in February 1974 an issue dedicated to Iceland: "The Iceland saga".

Tropical Canada!

Two metre long "millipedes" and thirty metre high "scale trees" once inhabited the now ghostly Joggins forest, on the western coast of Nova Scotia, Canada. A geological wonder, the Joggins Fossil Cliffs have been added to the World Heritage List.

Fossilized skeletons of amphibians and reptiles inside stumps of fossilized trees preserved in their upright growth position for 300 million years: that's what the Scotsman Charles Lyell and the Nova Scotian William Dawson found on the cliffs of Nova Scotia, eastern Canada, in the middle of the 19th century. Since this extraordinary adventure of the founding father of modern geology and the most outstanding Canadian geologist of the 19th century, the Joggins Fossil Cliffs have attracted geologists, studentsand other people of all ages.

These cliffs are not fossilized cliffs per se. They are made of sedimentary rocks containing fossils of plants and animals that existed when the sediments

© UNESCO/Walley Hayes
The Joggins cliffs are the Galápagos of the Carboniferous period.

© UNESCO/Walley Hayes
The Joggins cliffs have attracted visitors since they were discovered.

were deposited by flooding rivers, during the latter geological Carboniferous period.

The twenty to thirty metre high cliffs are made of numerous sloping layers of Carboniferous sedimentary rocks. They are covered by a ten to twelve metre thick horizontal deposit of Till or "Boulder Clay," left about thirteen thousand years ago during the melting of the thick sheet of ice that blanketed the area during the last Ice Age.

The cliffs are exposed on the shore of the Chignecto Bay near the head of the Bay of Fundy, to the North East and South West of the small town of Joggins. The late Carboniferous strata slope down to the south at about twenty degrees from the horizontal. In places, the originally horizontal sediment layers are cut by river channels that migrated to different positions while meandering over their floodplains. Later flooding deposited new sediment layers in the channels.

The Carboniferous sedimentary rocks and their contained fossils are all of non-marine, terrestrial origin, and provide many clues regarding the late Carboniferous environment and climate. All the clues indicate the sedimentation took place under a tropical climate, on a portion of the crust located in the Tropics near the Earth's equator.

Since then, ocean-floor spreading (Continental Drift) has made this part of the crust move northwards to its present position, about half- way between the Equator and the North Pole.

Giant millipedes...

Perhaps the most remarkable animal that existed in the jungle-like forests of Joggins during the Coal Age was "Arthropleura" – a two metre long arthropod similar to an enormous millipede or a sowbug, which lived on the rotting vegetation of the forest floor. Large slabs bearing this beast's distinctive footprints were found in 1964 in a huge rock fall near Lower Cove, at the northern end of the cliff section. The footprints, recovered in 1966, were moulded into a polyester-resin and fibreglass cast that was on display at Mount Allison University in Sackville (New Brunswick) until 1999, and is now at the Fundy Geological Museum in Parrsboro, Nova Scotia. A large piece of the rock bearing the original trackway is on display at the new Joggins Fossil Cliffs Interpretive Centre.

No actual specimen of the animal itself has been found at Joggins, but its tracks are abundant and it must have existed there in large numbers. Similar trackways occur in other areas of the Upper

© UNESCO/Walley Hayes
Fossilized tree.

Carboniferous rocks in Nova Scotia, and also on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean in western Scotland, on the Island of Arran in the Firth of Clyde.

Besides actual land-dwelling creatures such as "Arthropleura", fossils of aquatic animals living in the rivers and lakes of the area and rare examples of airborne, flying insects, such as large dragonflies, have been found.

… and scale trees

The trees in this equatorial jungle were enormous "Scale Trees" related to present-day Club Mosses or Lycopods. Their bark was covered by leaf scars that looked similar to the scales of fish or reptiles, and whose pattern varied depending on the type of tree. A diamond pattern is usually characteristic of "Lepidodendron" whereas "Sigillaria" is characterized by parallel vertical rows of scars on the trunk. "Lepidodendron" and "Sigillaria" were the most abundant trees in the ancient Joggins forests.

These trees were gigantic: the fossilized trunks could reach one metre in diameter and be thirty metres high. Their roots, called Stigmaria, are sediment-filled cylindrical fossils spreading out from the bases of the stumps. They are found in a layer of fossil soil called seat-earth or underclay, upon which the trees used to grow. Such layers were usually located below coal seams, which resulted from the combination of tree remains, rotten vegetation and peat that accumulated on the forest floor and were compressed by successive sediment layers and forests.

The boggy undergrowth of the forests abounded in Calamites, a plant species similar to present-day Horsetails or Equisetums whose fossilized stems, occasionally with needle-like leaves still attached, are often found in the area.

If you want a little souvenir, the beach and foreshore of Joggins are full of sandstone casts of Calamites and Stigmaria. However, be careful! The site is a protected area where fossils cannot be extracted from the cliffs or foreshore reefs without a special permit.

Laing Ferguson, Mount Allison University, Sackville (New Brunswick, Canada).

Focus

The people who made history dance

The 23rd of August has been proclaimed "International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition". As the Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, said in 2004, "Facing us with the banality of evil, it forces us to reflect on the state of our rights and freedoms in the present." That year, the International Year Commemorating the Struggle Against Slavery and its Abolition, marked the bicentennial of the proclamation of the first black state, Haiti.

© UNESCO/Michel Ravassard
René Depestre at UNESCO, 2006.

The UNESCO Courier takes part in the celebration of the Day by running unpublished excerpts from an interview Haitian writer René Depestre gave to Jasmina Šopova on 25 September 2006 at UNESCO.

Africans who were deported to America by the slave trade, who were wrenched from their traditional cultures and ethnic distinctions and found themselves on plantations, had lost their bearings. But they recreated them in suffering, in servile work, in extraordinarily precarious circumstances, thus becoming the founders of new cultures in the Caribbean. These cultures took on their own directions, separating themselves from the African and European heritage they synthesized.

When they had just got off the slave ship and they were offered only the ideology of Christianity, they took from it what suited them and kept part of their own religious tradition. Had they only accepted Christianity pure and simple, they would have become resigned to their lot, and waited for a better one in heaven. Instead they put drumming in their prayers and from that joyful cultures emerged, based on dancing and singing and joie de vivre. They made history dance.

Joy against the tailspin of unhappiness

From this grew the extraordinary musical forms of Brazil, the Caribbean, Venezuela. This was the source of Negro spirituals, jazz, blues – all precursors of the movements that began to globalize planetary sensibilities.

© NESCO/Michel Ravassard
20 March 2004: celebration at UNESCO of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

© UNESCO/Michel Claude
Voodoo dances around the fire, Haïti.

We did not collapse into endless bitterness, into revenge and feuds, into score-settling, as in Islamist fundamentalism today, turned into the archetypal model of the unhappy consciousness in a tailspin.

We got off easy, because we were able to change the words of history, the words of the plantation, the words of cotton and sugar and coffee and spices, into supreme vitality! Our approach was dynamic, not mental. The mental one would have plunged us into Christian moroseness, into resignation.

We're not out of the woods yet

The truth is their bodies were attacked, not only because they were reduced to slavery – complete lack of freedom for the body – not only because they were subjected to onerous farm work, but also because the colour of their skin was disqualified, given a pejorative, denigrating, slanderous meaning. An issue was introduced into the social debate that did not exist in the slavery of antiquity. During the time of the slave trade, the slave was not only reduced to the state of beast of burden, but because of his colour, he deserved his servile fate. That is extremely serious.

The so-called Whites could not imagine to what degree adding this other very frustrating psychological dimension to the slavery dimension would create

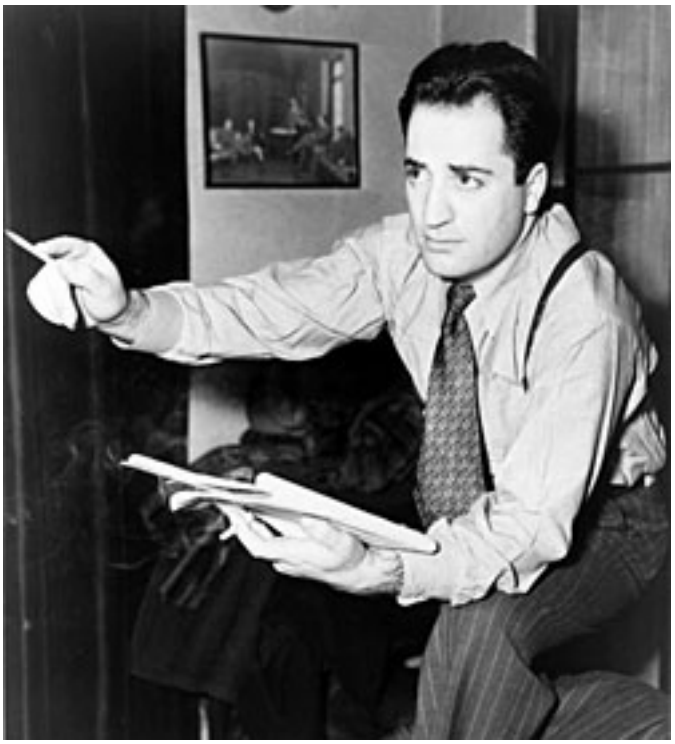
existential conflicts and influence the idea slaves developed of themselves and their place in the human species. By thus changing the level of the relationship of master and slave, which was already an archetypal relationship in the history of humanity, we complicated things enormously, which is why we're not quite out of the woods yet.

Landmarks

His name is Saroyan

William Saroyan is not simply the writer with a style as light as the mists above the fields and fruit trees of Fresno, his hometown in California (United States). His work, strongly influenced by a childhood torn between the Armenia of his origins and the promise of America at the beginning of the 20th century, is marked by the dislocation of immigration and uprooting.

A prolific author with a tone both tender and sarcastic about the small world that nurtured his early years, William Saroyan had a life darker than his sunny writings would lead us to believe.



© All rights reserved

In "My name is Aram", William Saroyan paints the best portrait of his youth in California.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of his birth on 31 August 2008, the UNESCO Courier pays tribute to a writer of substantial humor and infinite melancholy.

William Saroyan was born on 31 August 1908 in Fresno, into an Armenian family that had immigrated to California in the United States. The family cocoon soon disintegrated. His father, a modest farmer who had tried briefly to find fortune in New Jersey, died in 1911. The family fell apart and William and his brothers were sent to the orphanage. Six years later, his mother Takouhi found work and was able to take her children back. Young William was restored to an almost normal family life in Fresno, where most of the residents were Armenian farmers.

Saroyan taught himself to write by devouring all the books that fell into his hands. He quit school early, finding a job at the San Francisco Telegraph Company, and started writing his first pieces, some of which were published by the Armenian-American newspaper "Hairenik", founded in Boston in 1889 by the Hayerenik Association. Originally published in Armenian, the paper became entirely English-language in 1969 under the name "Armenian Weekly".

Much of Saroyan's writing is set in Fresno, which has decided to celebrate his centenary this year. Many first-generation Armenian immigrants found a home there, as did survivors of the 1915 genocide. Saroyan's childhood left him with strong impressions. He depicts a semi-peasant society where Armenian-American children grew up among the watermelon fields, the big traditional patriarchal Armenian family and school, which was supposed to teach them the rules and language of their new homeland.

Though warm, the "family clan" described by Saroyan is deeply nostalgic for the natal soil. It is also marked by the contrast between Armenian society and the often painful adjustment to American society.

The writer who turned down the Pulitzer prize

It was undoubtedly in "My name is Aram", published in 1940, that Saroyan most vividly portrayed the years of his youth amidst a gallery of truculent and offbeat adult characters, a slice of secular Armenian life under the California sun. Yet it was another book,

"The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze and Other Stories", published in 1934, that brought him significant success. Saroyan describes the tribulations of a young writer in America's Great Depression. In 1946, he published "The Adventures of Wesley Jackson" and narrowly escaped court-marshal, the army deeming the book overly pacifist.

His first theatre play in 1939, "My heart's in the Highlands", was staged at the Guild Theatre in New York. His other play published that year, "The Time of your Life", earned him a Pulitzer prize, which he refused. Some say Saroyan rejected the idea of a press magnate like Pulitzer judging works of art; others maintain Saroyan simply thought the play was "no better and no worse" than the rest of his work.

Most of Saroyan's narratives have a light tone and a host of humorous details, yet melancholy often seeps in. His life was far from harmonious. At the end of the war and following his marriage, which would give him two children, his growing success assured him an income. He began dividing his time between Fresno and travel to Europe and to Russia to visit Armenia, but also took to alcohol and gambling. His contradictory passions prompted a divorce. By the end of the 1950s, he was living more or less permanently in Paris, still drinking and gambling. He died 18 May 1981 in the place where he was born, Fresno.

Laurence Ritter, Armenian journalist

© UNESCO/Michel Ravassard
Reinstallation of the Axum Obelisk's first slab, June 2008.

Next month

Africa in the Spotlight

In September, a monolith weighing 152 tons and standing 24 metres high will be erected within the Aksum (Ethiopia) archaeological site, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1980. It's the famous Axum obelisk, carried off to Rome in 1937 by Mussolini and now back in its homeland. About 1700 years old, it has become a symbol of Ethiopian identity.

The next issue of the Courier will devote special coverage on the inauguration event of the Axum obelisk, an event which will bring together a number of well-known personalities from the political and cultural spheres.

On 8 September, UNESCO is celebrating the International Literacy Day. To mark this special occasion, the Courier is featuring the winners of the 2008 UNESCO Literacy Prize, with an editorial penned by the accomplished Swedish writer, Henning Mankell, who has been engaged in the fight against HIV and AIDS in Africa.

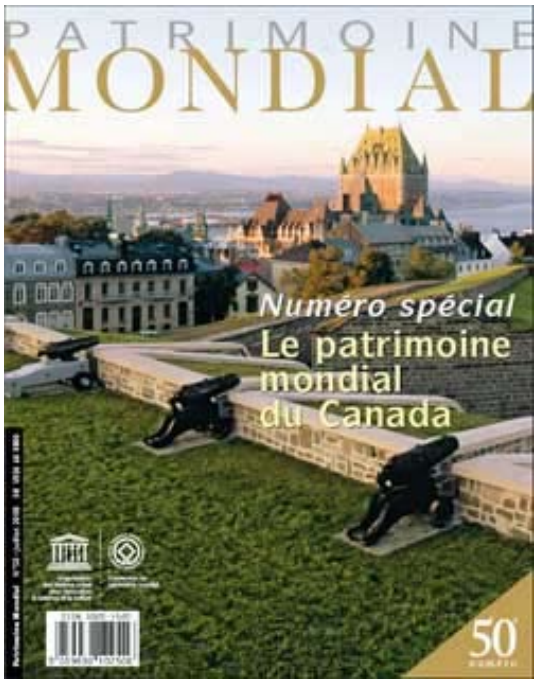
Partners

The World Heritage Centre

offers assistance to States Parties in preparing nominations, advising them on the proper format and necessary maps and documentation. Once the completed nomination files are received, the Centre reviews them to check if they are complete, and then transmits them to the appropriate advisory bodies for evaluation. The Centre maintains the official archive of all nominations in electronic and paper versions for research purposes.

World Heritage,

quarterly magazine published in English, French and Spanish, contains feature articles and news about World Heritage sites accompanied by stunning photographs and detailed maps.



Travel in pictures

Twenty-seven new sites have just been inscribed on the World Heritage List in Quebec (Canada). In this article, the Courier takes you on a trip with six ports of call: Albania, China, New Caledonia, Slovakia, Switzerland and Yemen.

© UNESCO/Milos Dudas
The Wooden Churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area present good examples of a rich local tradition of religious architecture, marked by the meeting of Latin and Byzantine cultures.

© UNESCO/Rhb/Andrea Badrutt, Chur
The Rhaetian Railway in the Albula / Bernina Landscapes (Switzerland / Italy) brings together two historic railway lines that cross the Swiss Alps through two passes. It constitutes an outstanding technical, architectural and environmental ensemble and embodies architectural and civil engineering achievements, in harmony with the landscapes through which they pass.

© UNESCO/Linda Shen

Socotra Archipelago (Yemen), in the north-west Indian Ocean, comprises four islands and two rocky islets which appear as a prolongation of the Horn of Africa. The site is of universal importance because of its biodiversity with rich and distinctive flora and fauna.

© UNESCO/Ermal Koci

Berat (Albania) is a rare and well-preserved example of a Ottoman town in the Balkans.

© UNESCO/Service de la marine marchande - Gouvernement de la NCt

The Lagoons of New Caledonia (France) display intact ecosystems, with healthy populations of large predators, and a great number and diversity of big fish.

© UNESCO/Liu Feng

Le Parc national du mont Sanqingshan (centre-est de la Chine), a été inscrit pour la qualité esthétique exceptionnelle de son paysage, remarquable par la présence de 48 pics et 89 colonnes de granit dont beaucoup ressemblent à des silhouettes humaines ou animales.

The UNESCO Courier is published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
7, place de Fontenoy – 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

General inquiries by e-mail: courier.unesco@unesco.org

Director: Saturnino Muñoz Gómez
Editor in Chief: Jasmina Šopova
French Editor: Agnès Bardon
English Editor: Ariane Bailey
Spanish Editor: Lucía Iglesias Kuntz
Arabic Editor: Bassam Mansour
Russian Editors: Katerina Markelova
Chinese Editor: Weiny Cauhape
Layout: Marie Moncet
Photo and Features Editor: Fiona Ryan
Web Platform: Stephen Roberts, Fabienne Kouadio, Chakir Piro

Articles and photos credited UNESCO may be reproduced and/or translated providing the credit line reads "Reproduced from the UNESCO Courier", and include date and hyperlink. Photos without UNESCO credit require specific authorization.

Articles express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of UNESCO.

Boundaries on maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by UNESCO or the United Nations of the countries and territories concerned.

ISSN 1993-8616